



City of Austin

P.O. Box 1088, Austin, TX 78767-1088

September 18, 2020

The Honorable Stephanie Klick
Chair, House Committee on Elections
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910 Austin, TX 78768-2910
Via E-Mail: Teri.Avery_HC@house.texas.gov

Re: City of Austin Comments on Interim Charge 3

Chair Klick and Members of the House Committee on Elections:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written comments on the Committee's Interim Charge 3 concerning the state strengthening voter integrity and fair elections.

The City of Austin appreciates the work of the Committee on Elections to strengthen voter access and fair elections. The City shares in these goals and is proud to have affirmed by resolution that the foundational importance of the right to vote in free and fair elections justifies and requires vigilant protection and active encouragement at every level of government.¹

Please find attached an excerpt from [Resolution No. 20191017-033](#) adopted by the Austin City Council on October 17, 2019 that includes the City's support for measures to modernize and expand voter registration efforts, restore voting rights, and increase civic engagement.

Again, thank you for your work on this most important issue and for the opportunity to share our comments. We look forward to working with you during the 2021 legislative session.

Sincerely,

Brie L. Franco
Intergovernmental Relations Officer
City of Austin

¹ City of Austin Resolution No. 20191017-033, October 17, 2019

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The Council directs the City Manager to include in the City's state legislative agenda support for legislative or executive action that promotes and protects voting rights and access to voting, to include as applicable:

1. The establishment of Let Texas Vote Day as a state holiday;
2. Increased requirements for employers to grant employees time off to vote during early election periods and on election days;
3. Modernized voter registration, including online voter registration;
4. Mandated voter registration at all county offices and points of service;
5. Same-day or automatic voter registration;
6. Support for improved and more inclusive volunteer deputy registration training and certification;
7. Expansion of the Countywide Polling Place Program;
8. Expansion of the early voting period;
9. Increased state funding for elections administration and security;
10. Increased state funding for voter education;
11. Repeal of punitive and restrictive identification requirements to access the ballot;
12. Restoration of voting rights and the right to stand as a candidate for formerly incarcerated individuals;
13. Civics education and voter registration information in jails and for individuals returning from incarceration upon completion of probation;

14. Increased outreach and distribution of elections and voter registration information to eligible Texans who are not currently registered to vote;
15. Increased funding and assistance to secure voting lists and processes;
16. Designation of colleges and universities as voter registration agencies;
17. Support for establishing polling places on college campuses;
18. Increased and improved accommodations for voters with disabilities;
19. No-excuse absentee voting;
20. Improved poll worker training and polling place standards;
21. Funding and guidance for paper-verified ballots and upgraded voting machines;
22. Protection of the rights and access of Texas voters serving in the military;
23. Elimination of partisan and racially discriminatory redistricting;
24. Moving voter registration responsibilities from county tax assessor-collectors to county clerks, reflecting the prohibition of poll taxes;
25. Creation of a Civic Engagement Board to increase democratic participation and engagement particularly among underrepresented communities;
26. Enforcement of existing state law requirement for school administrators to register eligible high school students to vote; and
27. Other legislation and executive action that promotes greater inclusion and civic empowerment.